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ABSTRACT

This report delineates the strategic plan of the Alabama College System, representing the culmination of a cooperative endeavour between the Alabama College System and the business community to identify the current needs of business and industry, design programs, and reduce the time between the emergence of technological innovations and their application in the business and education sectors. The first of the report's three main sections analyzes Alabama's growth and future in terms of demographic trends and indicators of economic development, education, quality of life, and state finance. The second section discusses the achievement of the mission of the college system through the following factors: open door admission policies, general education at the freshman and sophomore levels, two-year technical and vocational education, industrial development training, an upper-division academic program, developmental education, student services, committed personnel, affordable and accessible education, and community services. The third section outlines the six major goals of the college system: assuring instructional quality; revitalizing Alabama's economy; strengthening management and accountability; implementing educational partnerships; developing competent, caring personnel; and securing financial support for the implementation of the strategic plan. (MDB)

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DIMENSIONS 2000:

A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BUILDING ALABAMA'S FUTURE

State of Alabama
Department of Postsecondary Education
419 South Perry Street
Montgomery, AL 36104

1987

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THE GOVERNOR'S COMMITMENT

Alabama is on the path to success. I believe we can all agree this journey will be highlighted by economic development and a thriving educational system.

As Alabama matures, her doors are open to every national and international business leader. In turn, the economy will thrive providing competitive job openings which is unquestionably advantageous to each citizen.

Educationally, Alabamians must develop in a parallel fashion with economic growth.

The Alabama College System is an integral part in this teaching process. Combining community, junior, and technical colleges, The Alabama College System represents a network of potential throughout our state. Educating today's students and retraining current workers is an essential part of this economic/educational development puzzle.

As Governor, I will assure that these colleges become the dynamic contributors to economic, cultural, and social development that they were created to be.

Guy Hunt

Governor Guy Hunt
President
State Board of Education

ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

As Alabama's only college board of trustees elected by the people, the State Board of Education has a special public trust to assure that the colleges' actions respond directly to the real needs of Alabama. Therefore, we insisted that this Plan begin, not with the System's wants, but with Alabama's needs.

We now know what Alabama's future will be like if we do not intervene dramatically. The trends are clear, consistent, and ominous. Only with courage and commitment can we reverse the trends and create the brighter future Alabama must have.

A board of trustees can shape the future by redirecting the colleges today. Armed with the **Strategic Plan**, we have not only the courage but now also the blueprint for building Alabama's future. We urge every citizen to join us in making this vision a reality.

John M. Tyson, Jr.
Vice-President
State Board of Education
First District

Steadman S. Shealy, Jr.
Second District

Isabelle Thomasson
Third District

Dr. Ethel H. Hall
Fourth District

Dr. Willie J. Paul
Fifth District

Spencer Bachus
Sixth District

Victor P. Poole
Seventh District

Dr. Evelyn Pratt
Eighth District

A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Over the past three years, we have brought together hundreds of Alabama's finest leaders in business, industry, education and government to assess the critical needs of the state and to develop strategies for meeting those needs. This assessment involved analysis of volumes of data, major historical trends, and scores of national, regional, and state reports. This unprecedented undertaking has already resulted in many accomplishments including this, The Alabama College System's first **Strategic Plan.**

The unanimous consensus of these business leaders and elected officials was that The Alabama College System must play a critical, leading role if Alabama is to join the other Sunbelt states in economic revitalization. This Plan charts the new course we must take to reverse negative historic trends and to initiate a new cycle of progress for Alabama.

This Plan will require significant change throughout the System, with each college's actions reflecting these priorities. Our faculty and staff are not only prepared for this new role but are also enthusiastic about helping to create a more dynamic future. Our System, by mission and design, is the state's most responsive educational agency to technological, economic, and social change. All we ask is the opportunity to earn a full partnership in making Alabama the Great State of Progress.

Charles L. Payne
Chancellor

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INTRODUCTION

The Alabama State Board of Education recognized that informed decision making requires accurate, timely information presented in a systematic fashion, which carefully weighs constraints, alternative strategies, implementation outcomes and cost effectiveness. Accordingly, a task force approach was developed to resolve critical issues facing The Alabama College System and to initiate a strategic planning and management process.

The System has focused the talents, expertise, and abilities of its 3,800 employees as well as hundreds of leaders of business, industry, and government in a comprehensive systemwide assessment and decision-making process known as DIRECTIONS/DECISIONS/DIMENSIONS 2000.

The process addressed long-standing issues including strategies for meeting the educational needs of a complex industrial society; obtaining high technology equipment; providing professional development for faculty, staff, and administrators; assuring that technological changes are incorporated into the curriculum; fostering articulation with all segments of education; and evaluating and strengthening the service delivery system at the local level.

"The future must be anticipated and planned on a systemwide basis so the state's full potential may be realized."

Each task force has concluded its work and presented its recommendations; the State Board has accepted the reports and positive, statewide initiatives have begun. Copies of reports of both the work of the task forces and the current status of the initiatives are available upon request.

This initiative was designed to permit The Alabama College System to assess its twenty year record of service to the state and to develop strategies to respond to rapidly changing state, national, and international economic factors.

The unabated acceleration of technological innovation throughout American industry was found to be dramatically reshaping the industrial development of Alabama and the Southeast. Many traditional occupations were being eliminated or drastically changed while occupations requiring technicians with new skills continue to emerge. The competition for new industry in the Sunbelt has grown increasingly fierce as foreign manufacturing has become more viable.

Traditional industrial and educational strategies were found to be inadequate in dealing with this onslaught of technological change. Although these challenges had not been addressed statewide, individual system colleges were actively working with industry, local communities, and state agencies to forge aggressive strategies and responsive programs in an effort to revitalize Alabama's economic posture.

With the opening of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway System, the further development of Huntsville's high technology manufacturing community, and the expansion of Mobile's port facilities, the stimulus for continued economic growth is strong throughout the state. The Alabama College System has historically played an integral role in economic development. This network of colleges represents a unified delivery system capable of responding to the evolving needs of society, business, and industry more effectively and expeditiously than any other organization in Alabama.

A systematic, coordinated effort is now achieving an active partnership based on collaboration and mutual support between The Alabama College System and the business and industry community. Formal cooperation is resulting in the identification of current needs of business and industry, input into program design, and reduction of lag time between emerging technological innovations and their application in the business and education sectors.

As part of this process, programs which are no longer viable, which do not support major service, industry, or business needs, and whose level of complexity does not justify separate program status are being carefully evaluated and alternatives considered. Viable programs are being enhanced and new programs developed to meet the demands of emerging technologies.

Due to the rapidity of change and the potential for accelerated development, the future must be anticipated and planned on a systemwide basis so the state's full potential may be realized.

The **Strategic Plan** which follows represents the culmination of a cooperative endeavor involving the State Board of Education; the Department of Postsecondary Education; the faculty, staff, and administrators of the colleges; and hundreds of

dedicated, interested Alabama leaders from business, industry, and government. The planning process utilized was designed to insure that the plan will be responsive to the needs of all the people in Alabama. Recognized authorities in the field were consulted. Numerous advisory studies on education were analyzed, including the **Report of the Council of Twenty-One,** the **Fantus Report,** and the **Report of the 1986 Commission on the Future of the South.** An intensive data research project was initiated both to develop accurate, complete System data and comparative data. Intensive "think tank" sessions were utilized to review results and formulate action plans.

This **Strategic Plan** which resulted from these deliberations is presented in full recognition that a plan becomes out of date as soon as it is published. It reflects the best thoughts today of the direction that The Alabama College System must take now for its future development.

The **Strategic Plan** is organized in the following manner:

ALABAMA'S GROWTH AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS — addresses the forecasts for growth and change as well as the assumptions on which the Plan is based;

IMPACT OF THE ALABAMA COLLEGE SYSTEM — summarizes the twenty year and current impact of the System on the state of Alabama and the strengths that have evolved;

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR BUILDING ALABAMA'S FUTURE — presents the priorities to lead the System into the next century; issues the call to action for the Governor, the Legislature, the State Board, the Department of Postsecondary Education, and The Alabama College System; and seeks the cooperation of business, industry, state and local government, the public schools, and the state universities in accomplishing this Plan.

"Combining community, junior, and technical colleges, The Alabama College System represents a network of potential throughout the state.... As Governor, I will assure that these colleges become the dynamic contributors to economic, cultural, and social development that they were created to be."

— Governor Guy Hunt

ALABAMA'S GROWTH AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Certain predictions of changes in Alabama's population, society, and economy for the year 2000 are presented in this **Strategic Plan**. These predictions are based upon many sources, including the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Economic Abstract of Alabama, surveys by The College Board, data from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, and research by both Auburn University and the University of Alabama.

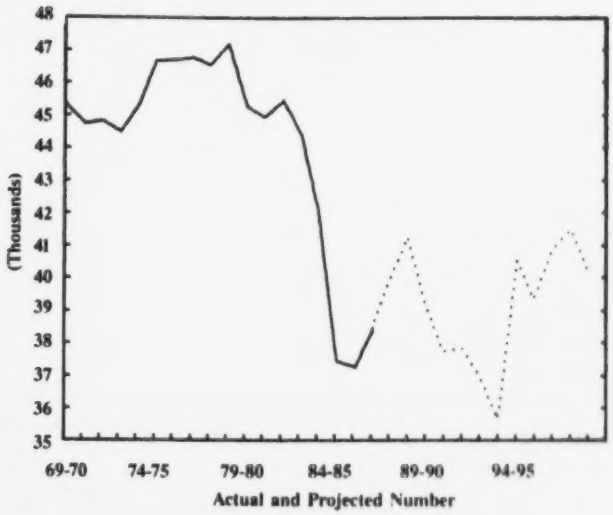
The valuable work of these agencies and institutions is acknowledged, as they contributed greatly to the better understanding of Alabama's growth and future.

Demographic Trends

Alabama, with a population of over 4,000,000, is the 22nd most populous state in the United States. It ranked 13th of the 15 southern states in growth in the years from 1970 to 1985.

A population growth of 12.5 percent is projected for Alabama from 1985 to 2000. This is slightly lower than the U.S. projected growth rate but much lower than the Southern region average

ALABAMA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES



projected growth rate of over 21 percent.

Individual county growth rates projected from 1985 to the year 2000 vary from over 68 percent in Shelby County to a loss of almost 7 percent in Dale County.

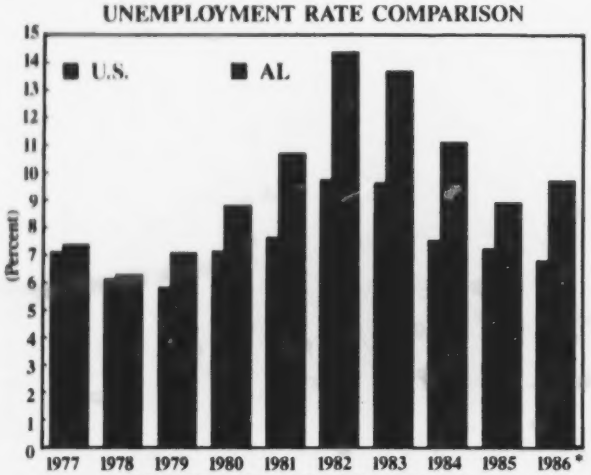
The racial profile of Alabama residents is almost exclusively two groups — white and black. Together they constitute over 99 percent of the population. The white population was 73.8 percent; the black, 25.6 percent of the total in 1980. This was almost identical to the 1970 distribution. An increase in the percentage of black residents is projected for Alabama but no significant increase in other minorities is projected for the year 2000. This is in contrast to the national proportion of minorities which is expected to grow to 33 percent by 2010, and which includes fast growing populations of Hispanic and Asian minorities.

Numbers of Alabama high school graduates are currently the lowest in over 16 years, at 37,231 for 1985-86. However the rapid decline of the past ten years has stopped, with slight growth and fluctuations that should keep the number of graduates between 35,000 and 41,000 over the next ten years. These data are in contrast with the national profile which shows a steady decline in teenagers from the mid-seventies through the 1990's.

Alabama's population is becoming more urban with fewer than 3 percent of the population now residing on a farm while 62 percent reside in metropolitan areas.

The Alabama population growth rate has been significantly lower than the national growth rate for two decades. This population decline has already resulted in the loss of one congressional seat. If current out-migration and lower than national and regional growth continues, Alabama could lose yet another congressional seat. This has meant, and will continue to mean, reduced national political impact for the state, and an adverse effect on the state's economy.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE COMPARISON



(U.S. DEPT. OF LABOR STATISTICS) *est.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

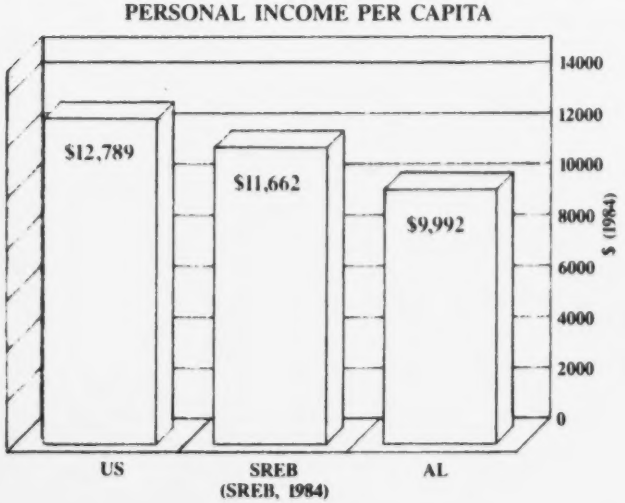
Analysts traditionally use past performances as key parameters in developing trends in economic growth and vitality. The projections that follow indicate the grim necessity for economic redirection and growth. To achieve Alabama's potential for economic development will require strategic intervention by the executive and legislative branches.

- Alabama's unemployment rate has consistently ranked among the highest in the nation for the last ten years.
- Alabama's per capita income level ranked just over 90 percent of the regional average and only 79.10 percent of the national average.
- Alabama's per capita income is projected to drop to 87 percent of the regional average by 1990, and to continue below the regional average through the year 2000.

"Alabama's economy will depend on how well and how fast current workers can be retrained and upgraded."

- With prolonged high unemployment, out-migration has exceeded in-migration by 4,000 people per year since 1980 and out-migration is projected to continue.
- Due to the extraordinarily high business failure rate in Alabama in the past few years, five jobs had to be created to net one additional job.
- Since the majority of existing workers will still be in the work force by the year 2000, Alabama's economy will depend on how well and how fast current workers can be retrained and upgraded.
- Women have accounted for almost three-fourths of the increase in the work force in recent years as male participation in the work force has declined.

PERSONAL INCOME PER CAPITA



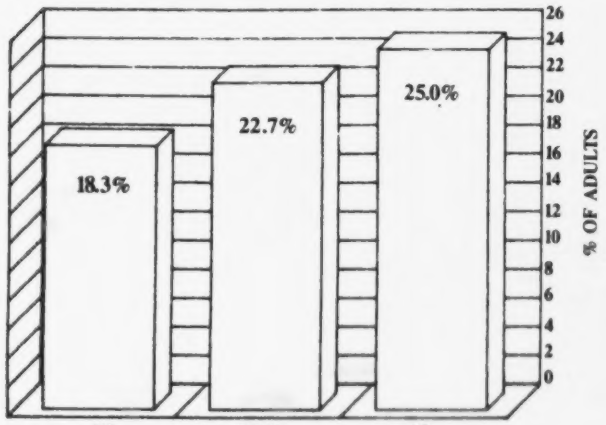
(SREB, 1984)

- The occupations expected to experience 20 percent or more growth into the 1990's are professional, technical, clerical and service.
- The largest numbers of new jobs will be unskilled, low-paying fields, such as sales clerks and waitresses.
- Alabama has faced a traumatic industrial shift away from manufacturing and steel industries that has resulted in a continual loss of jobs.
- The crisis in farming resulting from both economic shifts and weather problems is decimating family farming as a viable part of the economy; instead, farming is becoming a corporate interest.
- The prospects for military and federal civilian employment are encouraging with continued programs by NASA; by the Army in Huntsville, Anniston, and Ozark; by the Navy in Mobile; and by the Air Force in Montgomery.
- Alabama imports more than it exports with only about 1 percent of Alabama businesses producing 80 percent of the international business. This indicates a great potential, as yet undeveloped, for international business.
- Alabama's waterways are as yet not fulfilling their potential role in the state's economic development.

EDUCATION INDICATORS

Public education at all levels must respond to the challenges facing Alabama. The parameters below indicate the magnitude of those challenges.

ILLITERACY COMPARISON



(Adults over 25 with less than a 9th grade education)

- Only 67.17 percent of Alabama youth now graduate from high school, which ranks Alabama 43rd out of the 50 states.
- In Alabama, 25 percent of the adults over 25 years of age are considered functionally illiterate (i.e., have not completed the 9th grade).
- The entering freshman class for the year 2000 is four years old today, and research shows that many of them will be very hard to educate to the level of college admission.
- In 1980, only 25 percent of adult Alabamians had 1 to 3 years of college whereas the national average was 31.9 percent.
- Only 12.2 percent of adult Alabamians have four or more years of college, ranking Alabama near the bottom among southern states.
- The Alabama College System currently enrolls 38 percent of all students in public higher education in Alabama. This is consistent with the national average for two-year institutions. This percentage is projected to increase significantly by the year 2000 as The Alabama College System serves more non-traditional students.
- Alabama has 15 public universities in addition to The Alabama College System. There are also 17 private institutions of higher education in Alabama plus numerous private specialized trade or technical schools.
- The Alabama Commission on Higher Education indicates Alabama, when compared to regional and national averages, has a relatively large number of academic institutions for its population but a relatively low number of occupational/technical institutions.

QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

Factors influencing the quality of life in Alabama include climate, geography, population, recreation, housing, education, and cultural activities.

The mild climate and comparatively low housing costs are positive characteristics for the quality of life in Alabama. In addition, Alabama's system of state parks, national forests, and abundance of lakes, rivers and streams provide many, varied outdoor recreational opportunities. Sporting events, including community, high school, college and professional activities, are readily accessible in all seasons.

Alabama's cultural activities include a state symphony, a state theatre, four major art museums and several dance companies, children's theatres, and opera companies.

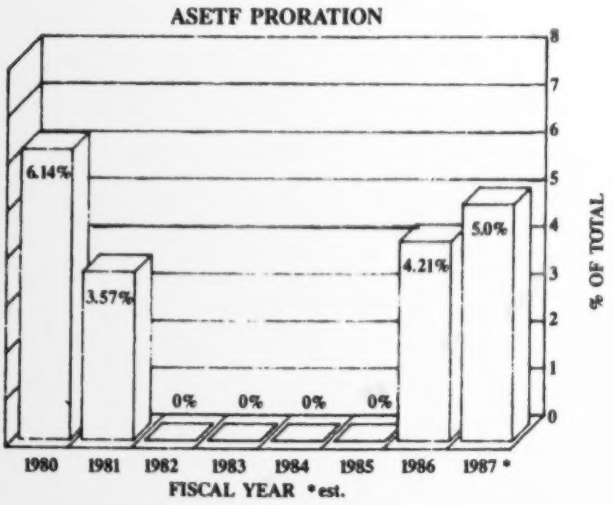
In spite of these strengths, Alabama is considered to have a scarcity of cultural amenities and continues to suffer from a negative image nationally.

STATE FINANCE INDICATORS

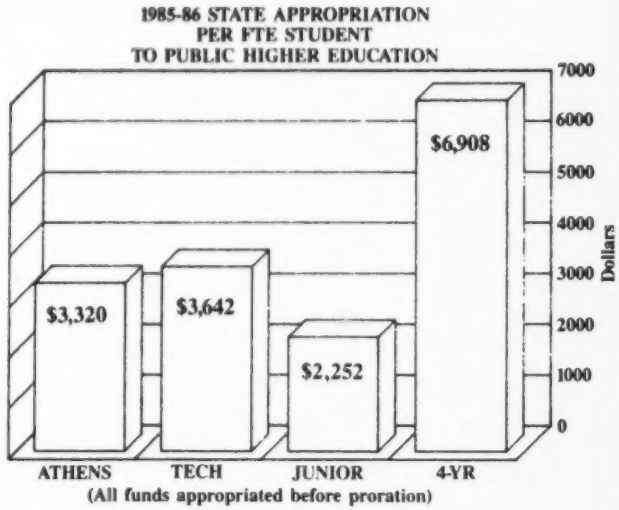
Alabama finances are affected by national, state and local factors, both political and economic.

- Alabama ranked 12th of 15 Southern states in financial support of education at all levels.
- Alabama support to public higher education increased more slowly than the national average over the past five year period.
- Alabama, whose per capita income and tax base are critically low, places the highest emphasis at the state level on education.
- A chronic fiscal crisis in education funding results from lower than projected revenue collections in the Alabama Special Educational Trust Fund (ASETF). Most recently these low projections caused a 4.2133 percent proration of

state education budgets in 1985-86 and resulted in an estimated 5 percent proration for 1986-87.



- In addition, cash flow problems threaten to delay the receipt of funds by institutions in the 1986-87 year.
- Alabama tax utilization, when compared to the national average, shows a much greater dependence on sales taxes, less dependence on individual and corporate income taxes, and much less dependence on property taxes.
- Education funding at the state level is heavily dependent upon sales taxes and other sources that fluctuate erratically.
- Alabama ranks last among the Southern states in **local** funding of public elementary and secondary education.
- Alabama ranks among the highest in the nation in the percent of funding to public elementary and secondary education from state sources.
- In 1985, the average American paid $902 in state government taxes; Alabamians, $727.
- Alabama operated in 1983 with the third smallest amount of public funds per capita of any state; that is, $1,739 as compared to $2,131 per capita for the United States.
- Alabama's economic capacity to generate tax revenues is among the lowest in the nation at $880 per capita, which is 75 percent of the national average capacity. All major tax categories, including sales, income, and property, have below average revenue capacity.
- The cost to the student for attending an Alabama community, junior, or technical college already significantly exceeds the regional average, creating a fiscal barrier to both higher education and enhanced employability for many citizens. Tuition has had to be increased dramatically to compensate for inflexible and diminishing state appropriations.
- In fiscal 1984, for every 79 cents in federal taxes paid by Alabamians, $1 was received in federal grants or transfer payments.
- The effect of the federal Gramm-Rudman law has already been felt in Alabama as fiscal 1986 federal revenues to state government dropped $24,000,000.



(All funds appropriated before proration)

"We now know what Alabama's future will be like if we do not intervene dramatically. The trends are clear, consistent, and ominous. Only with courage and commitment can we reverse the trends and create the brighter future Alabama must have."

John M. Tyson, Jr.

CRITICAL ISSUES FACING ALABAMA

A synthesis of this information through the DIMENSIONS 2000 process has shown that Alabama faces a number of critical issues. These may be considered in four major categories:

- **THE NEED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSIFICATION**
- **DEVELOPMENT OF EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION**
- **ENHANCEMENT OF QUALITY OF LIFE**
- **INCREASED FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

These issues must be addressed collectively by all segments of the state — education, business and industry, and government. This **Strategic Plan** represents the response of The Alabama College System to these issues.

IMPACT OF THE ALABAMA COLLEGE SYSTEM

The Mission and Impact

The Alabama College System has had a profound impact on the state of Alabama since its inception just over twenty years ago. The Alabama College System is currently the path over 60,000 citizens are taking to achieve economic independence. Whether it be quality, small class academic training in the local community for the first two years of college, or sophisticated, job-related training in preparation for occupational and technical careers, The Alabama College System is providing opportunities never before available to many of the state's future decision makers.

The Alabama College System is dramatically fulfilling its mission* . . . to provide all Alabamians a continuing opportunity for the development of knowledge and skills through quality programs and services that are affordable, accessible, and responsive to the needs of

* Adopted by the State Board of Education, October 1985.

community, business, industry, and government. The mission shall be accomplished under policy direction of the Alabama State Board of Education by the Chancellor of Postsecondary Education through the system of all public community, junior, and technical colleges; an industrial training institute; and an upper-division college. The mission is consistent with the legislative purpose which is "...to provide residents of this state with the opportunity to receive adequate instruction in the arts and sciences and in useful skills and trades..." **Code of Alabama, 1975,** Section 16-60-82.

This mission is accomplished through:

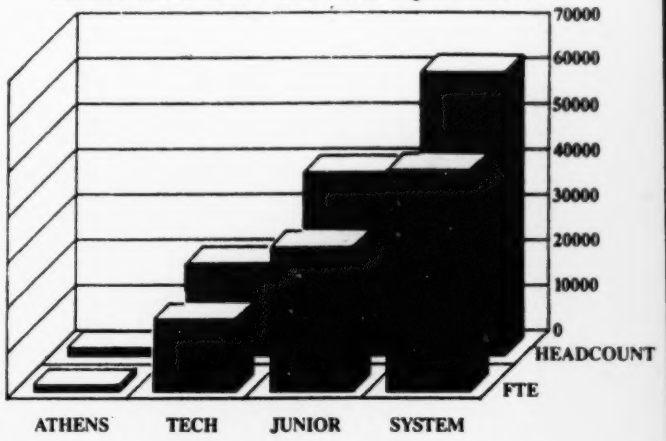
An **"Open Door" Admission Policy** which insures educational opportunities for Alabamians from all racial, sexual, ethnic, and social groups.

- 1,000,000 students have been served since the System's inception.
- Almost one in three Alabama adults has enrolled at some time.
- 96 percent of all students are Alabama residents.
- 12,000 students graduate each year.
- Currently over 60,000 students are enrolled in the System; these students represent 38 percent of the higher education enrollment.
- The student profile of race and gender closely matches the race and gender profile of all state residents.
- Full-time equivalent student enrollment continued to increase in fall 1986.
- Gender equity projects were initiated in 1985 at fifteen different institutions. These projects are designed to promote gender equity in traditional vocational programs.

General Education at the freshman and sophomore levels of undergraduate education that leads to associate degrees and prepares students who may wish to continue their education at baccalaureate institutions.

- University-parallel programs lead to Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degrees that can fulfill all freshman and sophomore level requirements.
- A General Education Course Directory assures transferability of courses among the community and junior colleges and facilitates university articulation.
- Graduates have a record of success after university transfer.

FALL 1986 SYSTEM ENROLLMENT
HEADCOUNT AND FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT

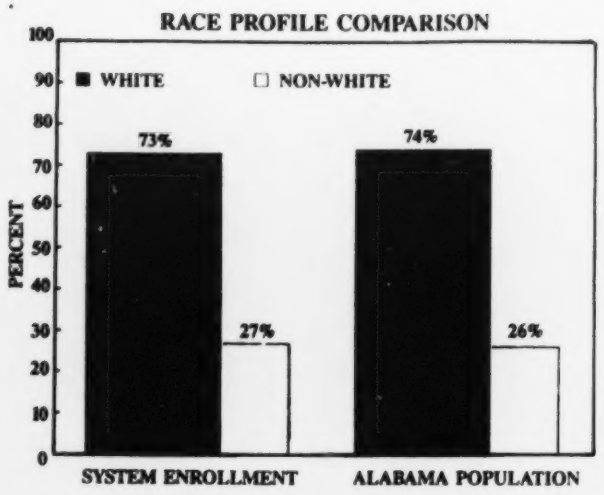


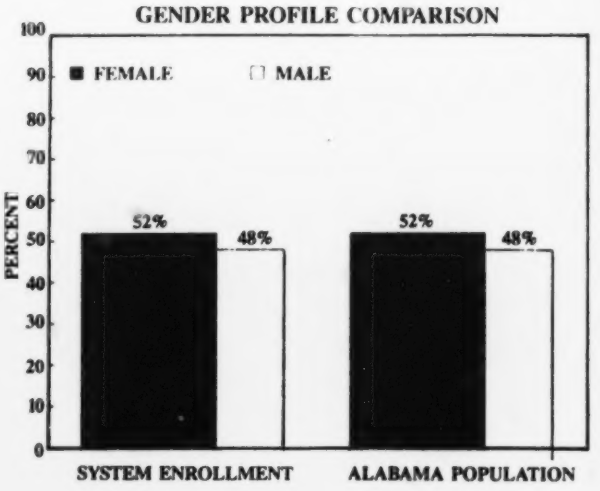
Technical, Vocational, and Career Education programs that prepare students for immediate employment in an occupational field and which lead to certificates, diplomas, and/or associate degrees.

- Occupational/career education programs lead to the Associate in Applied Science or Associate in Applied Technology degrees, diplomas, or certificates.
- Over 100 different programs are offered.
- Advisory committees assure that programs meet business and industry needs.
- College Job Training Partnership Act programs annually serve approximately 2,600 economically disadvantaged students.
- Model linkages in allied health and other occupational fields among System colleges and with universities balance efficiency and quality.

Industrial Development Training that meets the specific educational needs of businesses, industries, community organizations, and governmental agencies.

- Industrial development customized training has been provided to over 56,000 workers in more than 450 new and expanding industries.



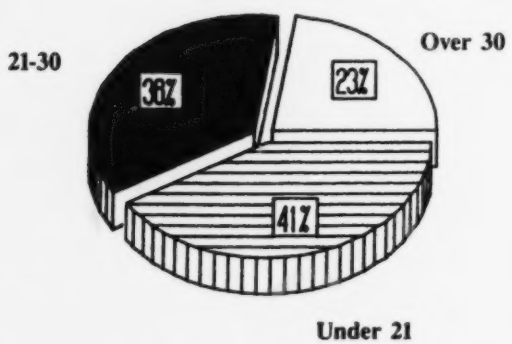


- The six Skills Training and Employment Program centers offer assessment, referral, placement, and training. The 32 assessment locations served 18,000 participants last year.
- Last year, 4,465 students received fire service training; 1,948 received waste and water plant operations training.
- Training for industry provides personnel skills updating and retraining.

An **Upper-Division Academic Program** which provides selected baccalaureate opportunities for the students of the postsecondary system.

- Upper-division programs lead to Bachelor in Arts, Bachelor in Science, or Bachelor in Technology degrees.

SYSTEM STUDENT AGE PROFILE



- Transfer of all courses is assured for associate degree graduates of System colleges.
- A unique nondestructive testing program is offered.

Developmental Education which assists individuals to improve basic learning skills, make satisfactory progress toward educational objectives, and overcome educational deficiencies.

- Developmental studies are offered for academically underprepared students.
- Federally funded Special Services programs at 18 colleges provide counseling, tutoring, and developmental studies for disadvantaged youth.

Student Services and Activities which assist individuals to formulate and achieve career, educational, and personal goals through counseling and academic advisement services and through opportunities to participate in vocational, social, cultural, and recreational activities.

- Skills of entering students are assessed for placement in appropriate courses.
- Students are individually advised.
- Displaced Homemaker programs at 27 institutions serve over 2,500 participants.
- Federally funded educational Talent Search programs at five locations provide services to prospective students.
- Cooperative education programs at 12 colleges provide students with work experience and income while achieving their education.

"Our faculty are exclusively dedicated to teaching and to student success."

- Numerous scholarships are awarded to athletic program participants, music and performing arts students, student government officers, and outstanding technical and academic scholars.
- A College Bowl League and academic honor societies stimulate and reward academic excellence.
- Vocational industrial clubs promote leadership and technical excellence.

Personnel who have a commitment to teaching and service, the qualifications needed to provide quality postsecondary education, a commitment to professional growth and development opportunities, and an orientation to community growth, development, and quality of life.

- With no research assignments and without a publish or perish imperative, our faculty are exclusively dedicated to teaching and to student success. They carry the nation's heaviest teaching load and are compensated above the national average.
- With 3,000 full-time and part-time faculty, a student-to-faculty member ratio of 20 to 1 is sustained.
- Part-time instructors produce less than 25 percent of the credit hours.
- About 20 percent of faculty in university transfer programs hold earned doctorates.
- No graduate teaching assistants are permitted.
- The 1,250 support personnel handle the myriad functions needed to support the academic program.

Affordable and Accessible Education which is made available by low tuition, comprehensive financial aid programs, and geographically dispersed, accessible campus locations.

- Alabama full-time student tuition is $200 per quarter.
- Tuition at $600 per academic year is the lowest cost higher education in Alabama. This figure compares to an average of $1,083 for the public senior institutions.
- Senior citizens attend free on a space available basis.
- A campus is located within an hour's drive of almost every Alabamian.
- Student transportation is provided by 22 institutions.
- Day and evening programs are offered at almost all locations.
- Over 1,000 handicapped students enroll annually—more than at all Alabama universities combined.

"The Alabama College System has an estimated impact on the state economy of over $500 million annually."

- Prison education programs were provided to 1,935 students in fall 1986.

Community Services which support personal growth, cultural enrichment, and recreation; provide access to college facilities for community activities; and promote community, social, and economic well-being.

- A wide variety of services are provided **without state funding.**
- Over 22,000 people are enrolled in community service courses annually.
- Over 2,000 business, professional or community groups meet in college facilities annually.
- Dance programs, music performance, and cultural enrichment activities are provided for both college and community groups.
- Five federally funded Upward Bound projects prepare high school students of outstanding potential for college.
- Public radio stations provide non-profit community enrichment and cultural programming not provided through commercial stations.

THE STRENGTHS

Over the past twenty-two years, The Alabama College System has evolved unique strengths upon which the future of the System and its role in Alabama can be built. These include:

- A **RESPONSIVE SYSTEM** with statewide efficiency and initiative that can respond quickly to needs, transmitting state level concerns quickly into meaningful services,
- A **STATEWIDE NETWORK** which provides a cost effective delivery system of educational services with consistency in both quality and delivery,
- **STRATEGICALLY PLACED RESOURCES,** including personnel, equipment, and facilities, all over the state,
- **COMMUNITY BASED INSTITUTIONS** that support local businesses, provide community services, and offer cultural activities, and
- **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS** resulting from an interest in each student as an individual by supportive, competent personnel.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR BUILDING ALABAMA'S FUTURE

The Alabama College System has established six major goals. These goals address:

- **Assuring instructional quality**
- **Revitalizing Alabama's economy**
- **Strengthening System management and accountability**
- **Implementing educational partnerships**
- **Developing competent, caring personnel**
- **Securing support to implement this Strategic Plan**

For each goal, objectives define what will be accomplished. Detailed implementation strategies for each objective are presented in the separate report of the Futures Planning Task Force.

"The quest for quality is the foremost priority. . ."

INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY

The quest for quality is the foremost priority for charting the direction of The Alabama College System through the year 2000. Our commitment to excellence requires System colleges to establish high expectations of each student and to provide an optimum opportunity for achievement. Because of our democratic ideal of opportunity for all, The Alabama College System must forge a commitment to excellence with rigorous academic standards ... but we must not confuse excellence with elitism. All Alabama citizens must be armed with the intellectual and technical skills essential to success in an increasingly technical and constantly changing society.

GOAL

Assure standards of instructional excellence which create transfer courses equivalent to the foremost university efforts and which establish occupational training outcomes essential to business prosperity and State economic revitalization.

OBJECTIVES

- Complete and maintain current a course directory of all transfer courses in the System, assure their equivalence and transfer acceptance by state universities, and eliminate courses of marginal utility to assure optimum efficiency in faculty resources.
- Develop and implement competency-based curricula statewide in all occupational programs based upon identified business/industry needs.
- Assess and validate the technical competency of students to prospective employers.
- Establish state-level program advisory councils of business/industry leaders and technicians to assure instructional relevance and standards of competency necessary for business/industry prosperity.
- Conduct evaluations of all occupational programs emphasizing fulfillment of standards of competency, adequate enrollment, student retention, job placement, and success of graduates.
- Promote national accreditation of occupational programs, when appropriate, to assure achievement of highest national standards.
- Strengthen requirements for all degrees, diplomas, and certificates to assure university colleagues and prospective employers of universally endorsed academic and technical standards of excellence.
- Establish instructional emphases which promote greater community civic responsibility as well as a more global economic and cultural understanding.
- Guarantee student access with excellence by mandating basic skills assessment and appropriate placement of all entering students, and delivery of skill building, tutoring, and enrichment experiences for needy and gifted students to assure optimum individual success.

"All Alabama citizens must be armed with the intellectual and technical skills essential to success..."

- Conduct retention self-studies at all System colleges and develop early warning systems and intervention strategies to promote student retention and success.
- Establish standards of instructional effectiveness at each college to document return-on-investment and to direct program improvement or deletion.
- Foster the establishment of Centers for Excellence in major program areas to build upon System strengths and to concentrate System resources for efficiency.
- Develop state-of-the-art emerging technology programs, from curriculum development through implementation, by meeting real training needs of specific businesses and industries on the leading edge of technology.

"Revitalization of the Alabama economy requires strategic intervention..."

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Revitalization of the Alabama economy requires strategic intervention to reverse an era of economic deterioration. Fragmented, traditional approaches have condemned us to economic impotence. Expert consensus mandates a coordinated, multi-dimensional approach which includes strengthening EXISTING BUSINESSES, recruiting NEW INDUSTRY, promoting ENTREPRENEURSHIP, supporting SMALL BUSINESS success, and establishing innovative SOLUTIONS TO CHRONIC ILLITERACY. The Alabama College System is a state-coordinated, community-based network capable of assisting in each of these areas and is legislatively directed to train citizens for the over 80 percent of American jobs that do not require a bachelor's degree. The System's promise and potential must be harnessed to assure Alabama citizens of a dynamic, prosperous future worthy of their dreams, hard work, and determination.

GOAL

Establish The Alabama College System as "public entrepreneurs" of economic development and full partners with business, industry and other community agencies in a coordinated approach to economic revitalization.

OBJECTIVES

- Guarantee that every graduate possesses state-of-the-art technical competencies and fundamental knowledge and skills vital to a rapidly changing economy.
- Expand the delivery of retraining services to existing businesses to prevent plant closings, promote business prosperity, and expand markets.
- Accelerate the recruitment of new industry by guaranteeing customized employee training at no cost to the new industry.
- Develop and implement entrepreneurship training and small business incubation/technical assistance initiatives at System colleges to increase new business start-ups and to significantly enhance their survivability and success.
- Promote a coordinated approach to community economic development, actively supporting other community agencies and providing the coordinating function when needed.
- Lead a coordinated, multi-dimensional approach to resolving the chronic illiteracy problem that undermines our efforts at vigorous economic development.
- Assure all unemployed Alabamians the opportunity to secure the skills and competencies for employment through Job Training Partnership Act programs at no cost to the individual.

"Goals and objectives must be crystal clear and value-driven; setting priorities requires tough choices."

MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

After twenty-two years, The Alabama College System has achieved the level of maturity necessary for full partnership in building Alabama's future. In this brief period, the System has grown to be Alabama's largest and most efficient system of higher education, larger than the two largest university systems combined. This young giant, serving over 60,000 citizens, requires strong leadership to deliver its full potential of benefits to the people of Alabama. The mission, goals and objectives must be crystal clear and value-driven; setting priorities requires tough choices. Strategies must be state-coordinated but directed by community needs and adapted to unique community characteristics. Every action must be evaluated for return-on-investment. Statewide responsiveness to emerging needs coupled with institutional flexibility permit The Alabama College System to manage for results—results worthy of its tremendous potential.

GOAL

Establish clear, strong direction and purpose for The Alabama College System, measure results against rigorous standards, and document return-on-investment worthy of its potential and the expectations of Alabama citizens.

OBJECTIVES

- Establish strategic planning at the System and college levels to set priorities, to assess results and guide improvements, to redirect resources for optimum impact, and to obtain the additional resources necessary to produce critical new benefits.
- Enhance our status as Alabama's most efficient system of higher education, by assessing every System service to eliminate unnecessary duplication and waste and by consolidation and coordination for efficiency, productivity, and quality control.
- Assure the flexibility and strengthen the capacity of each institution to meet emerging community and industry needs.
- Coordinate marketing analysis and program planning statewide to assure sensitivity to emerging clienteles and early responsiveness to their needs.
- Enhance the effectiveness and accuracy of communications about institutional and systemwide strengths to the public.
- Develop a comprehensive, systemwide management information system.
- Establish a statewide student tracking and follow-up system for all students.
- Facilitate planning and use of information and computer services, and sharing of expertise and software among the institutions.

"The frustration and waste of time, money and efforts of students caused by lack of coordination among all segments of education is an injustice to the people of Alabama."

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Critics call American public education "a fragmented, lock-step, inefficient non-system." Conceptually located between secondary schools and universities, The Alabama College System is ideally positioned to create a partnership that focuses not on the separate providers, but on THE PEOPLE WHO MOVE THROUGH EDUCATION. The frustration and waste of time, money, and efforts of students caused by lack of coordination among all segments of education is an injustice to the people of Alabama.

An educational partnership can eliminate unnecessary overlap in mission and objectives among the various segments of education and assure optimum impact where overlap is beneficial. Because The Alabama College System can perform this invaluable linking and coordinating function, **it must.**

GOAL

Lead all of education in a shift of focus to the people who move through education by establishing strong educational partnerships that reduce overlap and produce maximum impact in areas of mutual commitment.

OBJECTIVES

- Establish binding agreements with Alabama universities which guarantee that the transfer associate degree completely fulfills the requirements for the first two years of a baccalaureate degree.
- Assure equivalency in courses taught throughout The Alabama College System so that course specific transferability can be guaranteed between System colleges and universities.
- Guarantee student transferability among System colleges through technical-linkage degrees and, where applicable, course equivalence and competency validation.
- Establish linkages between secondary schools and System colleges that will include a 2+2 technical preparatory/associate degree program to produce the adaptable, competent technician of the future.
- Provide enrichment, advanced placement and dual enrollment options for academically and technically superior secondary students.
- Benefit secondary and postsecondary students through faculty exchanges, career counseling collaboration, dropout reduction strategies, instructional coordination, and cultural enrichment.

"Excellence in a college is almost entirely a function...of its personnel."

COMPETENT, CARING PERSONNEL

Excellence in a college is almost entirely a function of the knowledge, skills, experiences, and dedication of its personnel. Employing, retaining, and developing caring, competent faculty, administrators, and staff is by far the most important function the college leadership performs. In this era of incredibly rapid change, updating the knowledge and skills of personnel has never been more critical. The total knowledge of the human race is now said to be doubling every seven years and the rate of technological, economic, and social change is staggering. To assure that faculty, administrators, and staff are caring and competent will require constant attention to creating an optimum teaching and learning environment. This will also require salaries competitive with similar functions in business and industry; equity in salary administration; high expectations objectively evaluated; rewards for outstanding performance; opportunities for continuous, professional growth; and consideration worthy of the dignity of the profession.

GOAL

Employ, retain, and develop competent caring faculty, administrators, and staff in an optimum environment for working, teaching, and learning.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide comprehensive, professional development services for all personnel focused on disciplines, occupational programs, and staff functions.
- Assure all personnel an objective assessment of performance, emphasizing strengths and guidance for improvement.
- Develop and implement Individual Professional Growth Plans at each college, promoting continuous development for all personnel.
- Expand and strengthen college-sponsored professional development services systemwide, including education/industry personnel exchanges and multi-college curriculum projects.
- Foster excellence by recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance by faculty, administrators, and staff.

"This strategic plan must be funded if Alabama is to be prepared for the year 2000."

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Alabama College System was among the first to embrace and implement the reform concept in education. In fact, we have provided national leadership in many of these reforms. These efforts have dramatically increased instructional quality and community impact, but have also required significant redirection of existing resources. We made the tough choices — we eliminated unnecessary duplication, merged colleges, limited administrative staff, and implemented austerity plans on each campus. By these tough choices, we have become Alabama's most efficient system of higher education, educating over 38 percent of the students with only 22 percent of the higher education allocation.

By being the only element of Alabama higher education receiving regular legislatively mandated salary increases, we are proud to report that our two-year colleges rank above average among the 15 southern states in faculty salaries. In contrast, we rank a distant ninth in total expenditures per student. In fact, the SREB median funding per student at comparable colleges is a dramatic 25.8 percent higher than that for Alabama junior colleges and 15.2 percent higher than that for Alabama technical colleges. While we must continue periodic salary increases, it is critical that the gap between salaries and per student expenditures be closed.

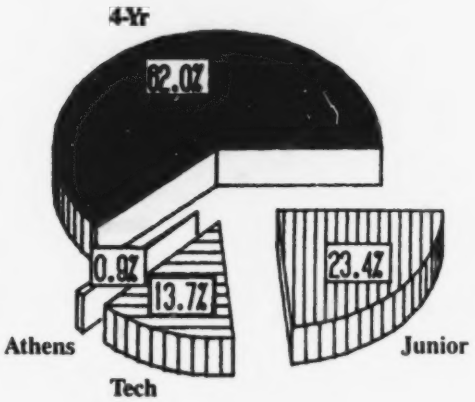
Salaries now consume over 100 percent of the System's state allocation. Operations suffer due to all funding increases being mandated for salaries. Tuition has had to be raised to questionably high levels to pay utilities and purchase instructional supplies. In fact, tuition has had to be increased by 100 percent in only five years. Bond funds designed to enhance the physical plant have had to be diverted to purchase instructional equipment and to maintain and repair leaking roofs and deteriorating buildings. Bonded indebtedness cannot continue to be used for current operations and deferred maintenance. A major part of the solution must be to increase funds for current operations and maintenance and to establish a planned, systematic process for facility renewal and expansion.

A second part of the solution is the establishment of permanent line items targeted toward quality enhancements and critical needs. We have proven our ability to reap dramatic returns on line-item investments in quality, such as professional development and instructional equipment. We promise similar returns on new line items. This strategic plan must be funded if Alabama is to be prepared for the year 2000.

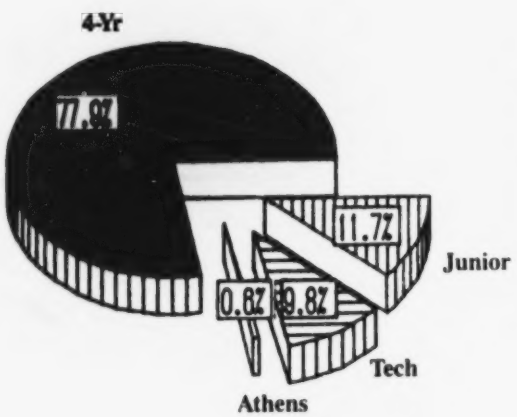
GOAL

Secure the financial support required to implement the Strategic Plan for building Alabama's future.

FALL 1985 CREDIT HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT



FISCAL YEAR 1985-86 STATE APPROPRIATIONS



OBJECTIVES

- Obtain an annual state appropriation sufficient to provide the quality and type of instruction and support services needed to fulfill the mission of the System.
- Secure capital outlay funds each year to overcome the effects of deferred maintenance and to update the instructional facilities, libraries, and equipment to current technology.
- Obtain funding to provide increased services that include curriculum development, business and industry coordination, statewide information systems, planning, research, program evaluation, and professional development.
- Develop funding alternatives for prison education so that necessary educational services to prisoners can be provided.
- Seek funding for the high technology equipment needed to provide new and expanding industry training.
- Seek funding to establish and operate career centers at each college.
- Increase the external funding available systemwide by strengthening the resource development function at each college.
- Obtain adequate Job Training Partnership Act funding to provide training opportunities for all unemployed Alabamians.

EPILOGUE

The economic situation facing Alabama is serious. For over ten years, Alabama has had one of the highest unemployment rates and one of the lowest per capita income levels in the nation. Projections for recruitment of new industry and economic survival of current businesses place Alabama far below both regional and national levels through the year 2000. Thus, many more adults who are now working and are now paying taxes face the grim prospect of joining the thousands of other Alabamians who, through no fault of their own, are unemployed.

The Governor and the Alabama Legislature have made education their top priority. Education receives approximately 80 percent of state revenues. Unfortunately, the state's tax revenues are woefully inadequate and the state's capacity to generate new tax revenue is below the average for the Southeast. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all segments of education to carefully assess the state's needs and redirect their resources to meet those needs. Critical times require critical decisions.

Without strategic intervention now, Alabama's next generation will face the same severe problems we face today. As a state rich in natural

"The Alabama College System is the state's wisest investment of resources ...(paying) back quickly in increased tax revenues, and it keeps paying back for a lifetime."

resources but very poor economically, we must coordinate state and local resources to gain maximum impact for each dollar invested. We must create a progressive climate and a solid infrastructure. But of foremost importance, we must establish education standards and initiatives that empower Alabama's greatest resource—her people.

The Alabama College System is uniquely positioned to stimulate a more immediate change in trends, to break the current cycle of hopelessness, and to initiate a new cycle of progress for Alabama. This System was created expressly to provide adults with the employment skills necessary for economic renewal and explicitly for the more than 80 percent of American jobs that do not require a bachelor's degree or above. By training adults for today's and tomorrow's jobs, by retraining to preserve existing jobs, and by stimulating growth and survival of new small businesses, Alabama does not have to wait years for a return-on-investment. The return is almost immediate, thereby creating new wealth and tax revenues which can begin to be distributed more broadly so that the new cycle of progress continues and grows stronger.

The Alabama College System is the state's wisest investment of resources. The investment is paid back quickly in increased tax revenues, and it keeps on paying back for a lifetime. With only five percent of the education allocation, the System has produced dramatic results, directly serving one in every three Alabama adults. With a relatively small increase in allocation, the Legislature can empower the System to lead the revitalization of the economy. This statewide network of community-based agencies has tremendous potential. With this **Strategic Plan,** The Alabama College System has the blueprint for Building Alabama's Future.

THE ALABAMA COLLEGE SYSTEM

COMMUNITY

Calhoun State Community College
Decatur, AL

Gadsden State Community College
Gadsden, AL

Lawson State Community College
Birmingham, AL

Shelton State Community College
Tuscaloosa, AL

George C. Wallace State Community College
Dothan, AL

Wallace State Community College
Hanceville, AL

George Corley Wallace State Community College
Selma, AL

JUNIOR

Alexander City State Junior College
Alexander City, AL

Bishop State Junior College
Mobile, AL

Brewer State Junior College
Fayette, AL

Chattahoochee Valley State Community College
Phenix City, AL

Jefferson Davis State Junior College
Brewton, AL

Enterprise State Junior College
Enterprise, AL

Faulkner State Junior College
Bay Minette, AL

Patrick Henry State Junior College
Monroeville, AL

Jefferson State Junior College
Birmingham, AL

Northeast Alabama State Junior College
Rainsville, AL

Northwest Alabama State Junior College
Phil Campbell, AL

Snead State Junior College
Boaz, AL

Southern Union State Junior College
Wadley, AL

Lurleen B. Wallace State Junior College
Andalusia, AL

TECHNICAL

Alabama Aviation and Technical College
Ozark, AL

Atmore State Technical College
Atmore, AL

Ayers State Technical College
Anniston, AL

Bessemer State Technical College
Bessemer, AL

Carver State Technical College
Mobile, AL

Drake State Technical College
Huntsville, AL

Fredd State Technical College
Tuscaloosa, AL

Hobson State Technical College
Thomasville, AL

Ingram State Technical College
Deatsville, AL

MacArthur State Technical College
Opp, AL

Muscle Shoals State Technical College
Muscle Shoals, AL

Northwest Alabama State Technical College
Hamilton, AL

Nunnelley State Technical College
Childersburg, AL

Opelika State Technical College
Opelika, AL

Patterson State Technical College
Montgomery, AL

Reid State Technical College
Evergreen, AL

Southwest State Technical College
Mobile, AL

Sparks State Technical College
Eufaula, AL

Trenholm State Technical College
Montgomery, AL

Walker State Technical College
Sumiton, AL

STATEWIDE MOBILE INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

Alabama Industrial Development Training Institute
Montgomery, AL

SENIOR COLLEGE

Athens State College
Athens, AL

SKILLS TRAINING

North Alabama Skills Center
Huntsville, AL

Southeast Alabama Skills Center
Dothan, AL

Montgomery Area Skills Center
Montgomery, AL

Birmingham Metro Area Skills Center
Birmingham, AL

East Alabama Skills Center
Gadsden, AL

South Alabama Skills Center
Mobile, AL

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
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